United Nations ST/AI/1998/9

Secretariat

6 October 1998

Administrative instruction

System for the classification of posts*

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/1, and for the purpose of implementing staff regulation 2.1 by setting out the policies and procedures for the maintenance of the post classification system, hereby promulgates the following:

Section 1

Request for the classification or reclassification of a post

1.1 Requests for the classification or reclassification of a post shall be made by the Executive Officer, the head of administration at offices away from Headquarters, or other appropriate official in the following cases:

(a) When a post is newly established or has not previously been classified;

(b) When the duties and responsibilities of the post have changed substantially as a result of a restructuring within an office and/or a General Assembly resolution;

(c) Prior to the issuance of a vacancy announcement, when a substantive change in the functions of a post has occurred since the previous classification;

(d) When required by a classification review or audit of a post or related posts, as determined by the classification or human resources officer concerned.

1.2 The Office of Human Resources Management, or the local human resources office in those cases where authority for classification has been delegated, shall provide classification advice when departments submit, with their budget requests, job descriptions for new posts and for the reclassification of existing posts.

1.3 Incumbents who consider that the duties and responsibilities of their posts have been substantially affected by a restructuring within the office and/or a General Assembly resolution may request the Office of Human Resources Management or the local human resources office to review the matter for appropriate action under section 1.1 (d).

Section 2

Procedure for classification or reclassification

2.1 Requests for classification or reclassification of posts[1] shall be submitted to:

(a) The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, in the case of:

(i) Posts in the Professional category and at the Principal Officer (D-1) and Director (D-2) levels, except when authority for classification of such posts has been delegated to the head of office, in which case the request shall be submitted to the head of that office;

(ii) Posts in the Field Service category;

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(iii) Posts in the General Service and related categories at Headquarter;

(iv) Posts in the General Service and related categories in small and medium-sized duty stations, except where posts at such duty stations are administered by the offices indicated in subparagraph (b) below;

(b) The Chief of the respective human resources office in the case of posts in the General Service and related categories administered by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Nairobi, and the United Nations Office at Vienna, up to and including the G-7 level.

2.2 Such requests shall include:

(a) A complete and up-to-date job description for the post in question, using standardized job descriptions, where applicable;

(b) An up-to-date organizational chart showing the placement of the post in question and of other posts that may be affected by the classification or reclassification requested;

(c) A valid and available post number confirming the existence of a post approved at the appropriate level in the budget, unless the request is submitted for advice prior to a budget submission. When available, the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) post number must be used.

2.3 The classification analysis shall be conducted independently by two classification or human resources officers on the basis of the classification standards set in section 3 below. The decision regarding the classification of the post will be taken by, or on behalf of, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, or the head of office. The head of office will make the decision in the case of posts in the General Service and related categories administered by ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the United Nations Office at Vienna, up to and including the G-7 level, and in the case of any other posts for which classification authority has specifically been delegated.

2.4 A notice of the classification results, including the final ratings and/or comments on the basis of which the decision was taken, shall be sent to the requesting executive or administrative office, which will keep it in its records and provide a copy to the incumbent of the post.

Section 3

Classification standards

Posts shall be classified:

(a) In accordance with the applicable classification standards established by the International Civil Service Commission for posts in the Professional category and at the D-1 and D-2 levels and for posts in the General Service and related categories at the duty station concerned, except as provided in subparagraph (b) below;

(b) In accordance with the classification standards approved by the Secretary-General for:

(i) Posts in the Field Service category;

(ii) Posts in the Security Service category at Headquarters.

Section 4

Implementation

4.1 Classification decisions shall become effective as of the first of the month following receipt of a classification request fulfilling the conditions of section 2.2 above. When a classification request is submitted for advice prior to a budgetary submission, the classification shall become effective once the reclassification has been approved in the budget.

4.2 The classification of a post shall not negatively affect the existing contractual status, salary or other entitlement of the staff member encumbering the post. Staff members whose posts are classified at a level below their personal grade level will retain their current grade and salary level, on the understanding that every reasonable effort will be made to reassign them to a post at their personal grade level.

4.3 Staff members whose posts are classified at a level above their current personal grade level in the same category may be considered for promotion in accordance with established procedures, including issuance of a vacancy announcement, where applicable.

Section 5

Appeal of classification decisions

The decision on the classification level of a post may be appealed by the head of the organizational unit in which the post is located, and/or the incumbent of the post at the time of its classification, on the ground that the classification standards were incorrectly applied, resulting in the classification of the post at the wrong level.

Section 6

Appeal procedure

6.1 Appeals shall be submitted in writing to:

(a) The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, in the case of appeals regarding:

(i) Posts in the Professional category and at the D-1 and D-2 levels or reclassification of a General Service post to the Professional category;

(ii) Posts in the Field Service category;

(iii) Posts in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters and in small and medium-sized duty stations, except when posts in such duty stations are administered by the offices indicated in subparagraph (b) below;

(b) The respective head of office in the case of posts in the General Service and related categories administered by ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the United Nations Office at Vienna, up to and including posts at the G-7 level, except where the appeal involves a request for reclassification of such a post to the Professional category.

6.2 Appeals must be accompanied by the job description on the basis of which the post was classified.

6.3 Appeals must be submitted within 60 days from the date on which the classification decision is received.

6.4 The appeal shall be referred for review to:

(a) In the case of appeals submitted to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, the responsible office in the Office of Human Resources Management, which will submit a report with its findings and recommendation for decision by, or on behalf of, the Assistant Secretary-General;

(b) In the case of appeals submitted to the head of office, the local human resources service or section, which will submit a report with its findings and recommendation for decision by, or on behalf of, the head of office.

6.5 If the review results in an upgrading of the classification to the level sought by the appellant, the appellant shall be notified in writing of the decision.

6.6 If it is decided to maintain the original classification or to classify the post at a lower level than that claimed by the appellant, the appeal, together with the report of the reviewing service or section, shall be referred to the appropriate Classification Appeals Committee established in accordance with the provisions of section 7 below.

6.7 The Secretary of the Appeals Committee shall transmit a copy of the report of the reviewing service or section to the appellant for comments, which must be submitted within a period of three weeks. The appellant's comments will be provided to the Office of Human Resources Management or the human resources service or section concerned, as appropriate, for their observations, which must be submitted within a period of two weeks.

6.8 In cases where the Administration has questioned the receivability of the appeal, the Committee shall first determine whether the appeal is receivable. The following appeals shall not be receivable:

(a) Appeals submitted after the 60-day time limit, unless exceptional circumstances warrant the waiver of the time limit;

(b) Appeals that are based on new functions which were not the subject of the contested decision;

(c) Appeals that are based exclusively on comparison with other posts without any reference as to the reason why the classification decision, on its own merits, would be incorrect.

6.9 If the appeal is found to be non-receivable, the appellant shall be informed of the decision and of the reasons therefor.

6.10 If the appeal is found to be receivable, the Committee shall so inform the parties. The Committee shall then determine whether it requires any additional information. It may invite any staff member who may have information relevant to the appeal to appear before it or request any additional written information that it deems useful.

6.11 For a meeting of the Committee, a quorum shall be required, consisting of a majority of the members and comprising:

(a) The chairperson or a member designated by him or her to act in his or her absence;

(b) An equal number of members designated by the administration and the staff.

However, if no members have been designated by the staff in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 7.2-7.5 of this instruction, within three months of a formal request to that effect, the quorum requirement shall be satisfied if the chairperson or a member designated by him or her to act in his or her absence and at least two members of the Committee are present.

6.12 The Appeals Committee shall adopt its report by majority vote. If the recommendation of the Appeals Committee is not adopted unanimously, any member who dissents from the majority position may have his or her opinion included in the report.

6.13 The Appeals Committee shall submit its report to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management or the respective head of office, as appropriate. The report shall constitute the official record of the proceedings in the appeal. It shall contain a summary of the case and a reasoned recommendation concerning the disposition of the appeal.

6.14 The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management or the head of office, as appropriate, shall take the final decision on the appeal. A copy of the final decision shall be communicated promptly to the appellant, together with a copy of the report of the Appeals Committee. Any further recourse against the decision shall be submitted to the United Nations Administrative Tribunal.

6.15 In those cases where the appeal is successful, the effective date of implementation of the post classification shall be, subject to the availability of a post, the same effective date as that of the original decision, as defined in section 4.1 above.

Section 7

Classification Appeals Committees

Establishment

7.1 Classification Appeals Committees to examine classification appeals and advise the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management thereon or the respective head of office, as appropriate, shall be established as follows:

(a) A Classification Appeals Committee for appeals concerning posts classified in the Professional category worldwide;

(b) A New York General Service Classification Appeals Committee for:

(i) Appeals concerning posts classified in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters and in small and medium-sized duty stations, except where posts at such duty stations are administered by the offices indicated in subparagraph (c) below;

(ii) Appeals concerning all posts in the General Service and related categories when the classification of the post at a Professional level is being requested;

(c) Classification Appeals Committees in ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the United Nations Office at Vienna for appeals concerning posts in the General Service and related categories administered by the office concerned, except where classification of a post at a Professional level is requested;

(d) An ad hoc Classification Appeals Committee may be established for a particular appeal or appeals concerning posts in the Field Service category.

Membership

7.2 The Classification Appeals Committee for posts in the Professional category shall comprise:

(a) A chairperson appointed by the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the Staff-Management Coordination Committee;

(b) Two members appointed by the Secretary-General;

(c) Two members designated by the Staff-Management Coordination Committee.

7.3 The New York General Service Classification Appeals Committee shall comprise:

(a) A chairperson appointed by the Secretary-General on recommendation of the Joint Advisory Committee at Headquarters;

(b) Two or more members appointed by the Secretary-General;

(c) An equal number of members designated by the staff representative body at Headquarters.

7.4 The General Service Classification Appeals Committees in ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the United Nations Office at Vienna shall each comprise:

(a) A chairperson appointed by the respective head of office, in consultation with the staff representative body or bodies at the duty station concerned;

(b) Two or more members appointed by the head of office;

(c) An equal number of members designated by the staff representative body or bodies at the duty station concerned.

7.5 An ad hoc Classification Appeals Committee for an appeal or appeals concerning Field Service posts shall comprise:

(a) A chairperson appointed by the Secretary-General in consultation with the staff representatives of the Field Service staff;

(b) Members appointed by the Secretary-General;

(c) An equal number of members designated by the staff representatives of the Field Service staff.

Terms of office

7.6 The chairperson and members shall be appointed or designated for two years.

Rules of procedure

7.7 Each Classification Appeals Committee shall normally follow the same rules of procedure as the Classification Appeals Committee for posts in the Professional category, subject to changes that may be approved by each Committee in the light of its own requirements.

Section 8

Final provisions

8.1 The present administrative instruction shall enter into force on 1 November 1998, except as provided in paragraphs 8.3 and 8.4 below.

8.2 The following administrative issuances, information circulars and personnel directives are hereby abolished, except as provided in paragraphs 8.3 and 8.4 below:

(a) ST/AI/277 of 10 November 1980;

(b) ST/AI/301 and Add.1 of 10 March and 12 July 1983, respectively;

(c) ST/AI/332 of 7 November 1985;

(d) ST/AI/344 of 3 August 1987;

(e) ST/AI/356 and Add.1 of 4 May 1989 and 8 October 1991, respectively;

(f) ST/AI/358 and Amend.1 of 31 July 1989 and 21 April 1994, respectively;

(g) ST/AI/369 and Amend.1 of 30 April and 22 October 1991, respectively;

(h) ST/AI/377 and Add.1 of 15 September 1992 and 18 November 1993, respectively;

(i) ST/AI/378 of 22 October 1992;

(j) ST/AI/389 of 13 October 1993;

(k) ST/AI/398 of 19 September 1994;

(l) ST/AI/410 and Corr.1 of 14 September 1995 and 31 October 1996, respectively;

(m) ST/IC/81/13 of 4 March 1981;

(n) ST/IC/81/21 of 19 March 1981;

(o) PD/1/81 of 6 January 1981.

8.3 In the case of appeals initiated prior to the entry into force of the present instruction, the procedure in effect on the date of their submission shall continue to apply until their final disposition.

8.4 The existing Classification, Appeals and Review Committees shall be renamed Classification Appeals Committees and will discharge their functions in accordance with the present instruction until their terms of office expire.

(*Signed*) Joseph E. **Connor**
Under-Secretary-General
for Management

Notes

[1] Forms P.270 for posts in the General Service and related categories; P.148 for posts in the Professional category and at the D-1 and D-2 levels; and P.289 for posts in the Field Service category.